

# Indians Must Organize

By DOROTHY WIGMORE

The Indians of Nova Scotia must organize to present a united front to deal with their problems. This was the main idea that emerged from a public panel discussion held Friday on the Indian-human rights and the law in Nova Scotia. A panel of four Indians answered questions and discussed the so-called rights and the problems of the Indian of the province.

"We are organizing with the hope of developing political power strong enough to be recognized and contended with by all levels of government," said Mr. Lawrence Paul, a former chief. "We are not citizens of Canada because we don't have civil rights. I don't consider myself a Canadian. I am a North American native," he added.

The Indians wish to be citizens, but under certain conditions. The rights which were taken away from them when they were put into "concentration camps" across Canada, must be recognized remarked Mr. Paul. The Indian is a ward of the federal government under terms of the Indian Act. But, one of their biggest problems is that any dealings which affect them are discussed only between the federal and provincial governments. The Indians are never consulted. Thus the first right that must be established is the right to negotiate so their needs and demands can be met.

The three main problems facing the Indians today are the Indian agency at the national level, the agency at the regional level and the non-organization of the people. Other problems bothering the Indians are the paternalism of the federal government, unemployment and education.

One way the provincial government could help is by taking over education. The federal government school system is not as good as the provincial,

and so when young people transfer to the provincial system they find the work tough and chances are they will be forced to drop out. Of the 250,000 Indians under the age of 21 in Canada, 200 are in university and only 13% get beyond junior high. This could be changed, said Mr. Paul, by negotiations between the Indians and the two levels of government.

Mr. Adrian Morris of the Eskasoni Reserve brought out another problem facing Indians. Despite the fact they pay all provincial taxes, except property taxes, they do not receive any benefits from them. The Indian may vote in elections, but that is about the extent of their political participation. Since they are not ratepayers, Indians cannot hold political office, nor can they run for a school board seat.

Mr. Gregory Johnson, another panel member, said that the Indians cannot get the laws changed themselves. They must have help from those who have influence in the government. The Indians must help themselves too. They must present a united front through organization. Nova Scotia is the only Canadian province that is not organized.

Asked if the Indian has become politically conscious, Mr. Paul said the Indian often does not know what he is voting about. "The Indian gets a vote, but this is not a right, it is a token", he said. "The Indian is still exploited, even at election time. He is given some liquor or a couple of dollars for his vote. The same thing happened 200 years ago with colored beads," he added.

Mr. Johnson suggested that the Indian should boycott the election if he does not understand the issues.

Right now the Indians are trying to get information from ARDA about grants to help train 5 Indian people to work on reservations. They are also trying to get Indian social workers because "only Indians know and appreciate Indian people's problems,"

# Intro Dal

The word is out — most people could tell you that Intro-Dal is our Open House — but opening of what? All departments with the exception of Physiotherapy are participating with some type of exhibit or other.

It is an opportunity not just for the public but for the university itself to take a look around. Our students rapidly become more and more specialized. This is an ideal chance to see what goes on in other faculties.

For students who have never been in the Forrest Building, the theme for Biology is "What is Biology?" The whole building will be devoted to exposing this science as much as possible with opportunity for participation with things like blood tests and the electron microscope.

If you crave culture, the Spanish department is presenting a short play, "Amor de Don Perlimplín con Belisa in su Jardín" as well as dancing songs, a slide show and a coffee house.

At the computer centre, they are combining science and the occult with computerized horoscopes or, if superstition is not your line, perhaps you can beat the computer.

Medicine will be displaying the Tupper Building and Commerce will be telling us, via lectures, exactly what Commerce is, in addition to their variety show.

Physics is putting on a big show, films and general interest (meaning the level of non-physicists), a liquid air display, open labs, and among other things, the High School Science fair. These are really just a few of the things going on and are subject to change, especially if you have suggestions for improvement.

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